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AUTHOR Davidson, Barry S.
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ABSTRACT

The process of determining student's residency status for fee payment at the University of Nevada-Reno is described and supplemental information forms that are used at the university are included. At the University of Nevada-Reno, residency decisions are the responsibility of admissions office professional staff. The university has a formal nonresident fee appeal procedure to address exceptional cases. The supplemental information forms that are used to make residency decisions are particularly helpful with military dependents and spouses and family dependents. These forms have improved processing and decreased the number of cases being referred to the residency appeals board. The forms concern: requests to meet with the Residency Appeals Board, Residency Appeals Board Brief, information on student full-time employment, and military dependent supplemental information. (SW)

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RESIDENCY DECISIONS: ANOTHER LOOK

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Barry S. Davidson is the
Associate Director of Admissions at
the University of Nevada-Reno

Mailing Address: University of Nevada-Reno
Reno, Nevada 89557-0002

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RESIDENCY DECISIONS: ANOTHER LOOK

An important issue to admissions and records officers at many state supported institutions of higher learning is proper determination of each student's residency status for fee payment. Individuals responsible for residency decisions review a myriad of applications for resident fees and for changes in tuition fee status. From the financial perspective, proper residency classifications are critical to an institution. From the viewpoint of the individual making the residency decisions, clear guidelines can alleviate personal frustration and help one deal more effectively with stressful determinations. The placement of the responsibility for residency decisions varies depending on institutional philosophy. At the University of Nevada-Reno, residency decisions are the responsibility of the professional staff in the admissions office.

Research indicates that in most states residency requires physical presence for at least 12 months prior to the date of matriculation, although a few states require only a six month waiting period to establish residency. This action must be for purposes other than avoidance of out-of-state tuition. Examples of some minimal evidence of intention to become a bona fide resident may include registering to vote in the state, obtaining a driver's license if the student drives an automobile, filing a federal income tax return in the state, and registering in the state any vehicles owned by the student. Ordinarily, without more evidence, the above may be insufficient to establish the requisite intention to become a bona fide resident in

some states.

Most post-secondary institutions have a policy to cover atypical inquiries on an individual basis. Special consideration is sometimes afforded to active military personnel stationed in the state and their dependents. Others seeking resolution on residency issues may include family dependents who have resided in the state for a period less than required by law, as well as spouses of residents. It is appropriate for state-supported institutions of higher learning to have an established formal nonresident fee appeal procedure to address exceptional cases.

From the public relations aspect it is important to adequately communicate the regulations governing nonresident tuition charges to constituents. In order to expedite and alleviate any misunderstanding of current rules for determining residency status or guidelines for determining change in tuition status, many institutions include information in either their general catalog or special brochures. In states like Nevada, where approximately 25% of the population is very mobile, the volume of routine inquiries on residency regulations is large. The University of Nevada-Reno has more than 10,000 students of which approximately 15% are nonresidents. The annual number of residency applications reviewed at UNR is approximately 2,500 of which over 500 are applications for change in tuition status. The quantity of residency applications at the University of Nevada-Reno led to the development of supplemental forms to acquire additional information prior to making a final residency decision. Applications needing further

information often involve military dependents, spouses and family dependents. A verification form addressing student employment status has also been helpful in eliminating conflict situations. These supplemental information forms have improved processing and decreased the number of cases being referred to the residency appeals board. Also, information provided on these forms has helped in responding more professionally to the numerous student requests for residency review.

It is important for residency classification officers to gather as much data as is needed to make timely decisions. One must work on developing communication, investigation, and interpersonal skills based on the number and complexity of cases reviewed. An interview with the applicant provides valuable insight into residency cases. Employers, as well as applicants, can provide needed additional form information. Contact with colleagues at other institutions and in other state system offices is sometimes necessary. Institutional legal counsel should be consulted when appropriate.

At the University of Nevada-Reno consistency regarding residency decisions is maintained by having one admissions professional who responds to all written and telephone inquiries. This individual makes the initial decisions on all undergraduate, graduate, and medical school residency applications as well as reviewing requests for change in nonresident tuition status. The director of admissions and registrar may be contacted for file review if a second opinion is needed prior to an appeal being filed for consideration.

In order to provide a forum for exceptional cases, where a strict application of residency regulations appears unjust, there is an appeal process. The board of regents, governing all University of Nevada System institutions, approved the forming of an appeals board for each campus. The appeals board at the University of Nevada-Reno is comprised of students, faculty, administrators, and emeritus personnel. The board functions as an informal hearing to review individual cases.

An admissions and records representative attends all board meetings serving as a nonvoting, exofficio member with the specific responsibility to brief all cases before the board review. Prior to each scheduled meeting of the appeals board, a thorough analysis is conducted of all residency appeals by an admissions representative. Key points of contention are summarized on a formalized residency appeals board brief form which accelerates and focuses discussions at board meetings. Each member of the residency appeals board has one vote; the chairman tallys and records responses to be forwarded to the president of the university for final action. The appeals board has the jurisdiction to recommend that applicants be classified as in-state students as authorized exceptions to policy. If the recommendation is approved by the president, the student is classified as a resident.

In a highly mobile society, state-funded post-secondary institutions have an increased interest in improving and streamlining the residency classification process. After reviewing residency fee

determination policies and procedures, University of Nevada-Reno admissions and records professionals have made minor adaptations in form and procedure which have expedited the residency appeals process for new, returning, and currently enrolled students.

TABLE 1

REQUEST TO MEET WITH THE RESIDENCY APPEALS BOARD

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY. COPIES WILL BE MADE.

Name _____ *SSN* _____

Address _____ *Birthdate* _____

_____ *Phone* _____

1. *List the minimal evidence submitted documenting your intention to become a legal, bona fide resident of Nevada (give the date each item was accomplished):*

   _____ *Registered to vote in Nevada;*

   _____ *Obtained a Nevada driver's license;*

   _____ *Filed Federal Income Tax Return in Nevada;*

   _____ *Registered vehicle in Nevada;*

   _____ *Other evidence. Specify.*

   _____

   _____

2. *Identify the clear and convincing evidence you believe substantiates your intention to become a permanent, legal, bona fide resident of Nevada. Check each item that applies to your situation:*

   _____ *Verification of 12 months of full-time (40 hrs./wk.) continuous employment in Nevada during the year for which residency is claimed.*

   _____ *Marriage to a long-time bona fide Nevada resident.*

   _____ *Ownership of a home with the intention of making Nevada your permanent, legal, bona fide residence.*

   _____ *Legal long-term lease with financial commitments extending beyond school years.*

   _____ *Special circumstances. Describe briefly:*

3. *I certify that all information provided is true, accurate and complete.*

_____ _____

Date ***Applicant's Signature***

TABLE 2

RESIDENCY APPEALS BOARD BRIEF

1. *Name* _____ *Birthdate* _____

2. *Date of physical arrival in Nevada* _____

3. *Date first registered at UNR as a nonresident student* _____

4. *Semesters registered at UNR as a nonresident student* _____

_____

5. *Married: No* _____ *Yes* _____ *Date* _____

   a. *Spouse has physically resided in Nevada since* _____

   b. *Spouses' parents have resided in Nevada since* _____

6. *Full-time employment in Nevada: No* _____ *Yes* _____

   _____ *Annual earnings* _____

7. *Own home in Nevada: No* _____ *Yes* _____ *Date of purchase* _____

   Amount paid _____ *Amount of own funds paid* _____

   Property in joint ownership with parent/relative: No ____ *Yes* ____

8. *Comments:*

_____ _____

Date *Admissions Officer*

Appeals' Board Action: *Approved* _____ *Disapproved* _____

Special Comments:

TABLE 3

FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

TO APPLICATION FOR CHANGE IN TUITION STATUS

Additional information is required to consider your Application for Resident Fees.

It is each applicant's responsibility to provide clear and convincing evidence of residency in the state of Nevada in order to qualify for resident tuition fees. All applications are subject to the regulations governing tuition as approved by the university board of regents.

Further consideration will be given when the following information is received:

1. *Legal Name* _____
   Last *First* *Middle*

2. |_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_|_| *Birthday* _____
   Social Security Number *Month* *Day* *Year*

3. *Employment verification is required for the year in which residency is claimed. Please provide ONE of the following:*

   a. *A written statement signed by a personnel representative to the dates of your empoyment, number of hours worked per week, and whether the organization/company classified/classifies you as a part-time or permanent full-time employee.*

      This written statement must be typed on organization/company stationery, and is to include a current phone number for official verification of the data provided.

   b. *Photo copies of all your W-2 forms and/or your Federal Income Tax Return(s) as supporting evidence for the period(s) claimed.*

APPLICANT'S CERTIFICATION

I certify the supplemental information provided with this application to be true, accurate and complete.

_____ _____
Date *Applicant's Signature*

RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM AND THE INFORMATION REQUESTED IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.

TABLE 4

MILITARY DEPENDENT

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Name _____ *SSN* _____

Additional information is required to consider your Application for Resident Fees.

It is each applicant's responsibility to provide clear and convincing evidence of residency in the state of Nevada in order to qualify for resident tuition fees. All applications are subject to the regulations governing tuition as approved by the university board of regents.

Further consideration will be given when the following information is received:

1. *Parent entered active military service as a legal resident of which state?* _____ *Date* _____

2. *Has your parent exercised the privilege of residency in any state other than Nevada since entering the military service?*
   No _____ *Yes* _____ *If yes, state?* _____ *Dates* _____

3. *Does your military parent have legal ties to any state other than Nevada? No* _____ *Yes* _____ *If yes, state?* _____

4. *Does your military parent own a home in a state other than Nevada?*
   No _____ *Yes* _____ *If yes, state?* _____

5. *Does your military parent own a home in Nevada? No* _____ *Yes* _____
   If yes, date of original purchase? _____
   Address _____
   Number and Street *City* *County*

   Has the house been rented to others? No _____ *Yes* _____
   If yes, dates? _____

6. *Have your parents filed Federal Income Tax Returns with a permanent Nevada address for the last two years? No* ____ *Yes* ____

7. *Has your military parent maintained a bank account in Nevada?*
   No _____ *Yes* _____ *If yes, from* _____ *to* _____
   Month *Year* *Month* *Year*

(continued)

8. *Is your military parent registered to vote in Nevada?*
No _____ Yes _____ If yes, from _____ to _____
Month Year Month Year

9. *Since entering military service, has your parent voted by absentee ballot in Nevada? No _____ Yes _____ If yes, which state? _____ Specify dates _____*

10. *Since entering military service, has your parent voted in another state besides Nevada? No _____ Yes _____ If yes, which state? _____ Specify dates _____*

11. *Does your military parent have a valid Nevada Driver's License?*
No _____ Yes _____ If yes, give date first issued _____
Mo Day Yr

12. *Are your parents' vehicles presently registered and insured in Nevada? No _____ Yes _____ If yes, give date first registered*
_____
Mo Day Yr

13. *Last date your military parent <u>physically</u> <u>resided</u> in Nevada?*
_____
Mo Day Yr

14. *Parents scheduled separation date from military service?*
_____
Mo Day Yr

15. *In which state do your parents plan to reside after completion of military service?* _____

16. *Provide photo copies of military documents showing Nevada as your parents' permanent place of residency.*

17. *Provide any additional information showing legal bona fide ties to the state of Nevada:*

APPLICANT'S CERTIFICATION

I certify the information provided on this application to be true, accurate and complete.

_____ _____
Date *Applicant's Signature*

Print your name _____
Last First Middle

RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM AND THE INFORMATION REQUESTED IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.